

COMMITTEE ON TRAFFIC/PUBLIC SAFETY

July 31, 2001

5:30 PM

Chairman Clancy called the meeting to order.

The Clerk called the roll.

Present: Aldermen Clancy, Sysyn, Vaillancourt, Pariseau

Absent: Alderman Hirschmann

Messrs: T. Lolicata, E. Pierce, Lt. Winn, S. Ashooh

Chairman Clancy addressed Item 3 of the agenda:

Communication from Alderman Cashin requesting a study be conducted in the Donald Street, Second Street, No. Main Street, and Boynton Street areas to determine what can be done to relieve traffic flow.

On motion of Alderman Pariseau, duly seconded by Alderman Sysyn, it was voted to receive and file this communication.

Chairman Clancy addressed Item 4 of the agenda:

Communication from Alderman Vaillancourt submitting copies of communications regarding lighting concerns in the vicinity of Memorial High School.

Alderman Vaillancourt stated I asked Mr. MacKenzie and Mr. LaFreniere to be here for this and I would like them both to come forward now. This seems to be a problem that we have in a lot of areas of the City. This was brought to my attention by Michael Pelletier who lives in Ward 6 I believe but he brought it to my attention because it concerns the vicinity of Memorial High School, which would be Weston Road, which is in Ward 8. I forwarded this documentation to Leo Bernier who submitted it to Mr. MacKenzie. I thought perhaps what we should do is make sure from the Inspection Department that we are following the ordinances that already exist and if the Planning Department thinks these are sufficient or if we should have a new ordinance. First of all, I want to know if anybody can tell me if the situation at Memorial High School has been remedied.

Mr. Bruce Thomas stated we have resolved that situation with Memorial High School. All of the light fixtures have been fitted with the light blocks. Actually the fixtures they put on are actually better than the ones they show here because they overhang the light by about 4 inches. I think you have this in your package. I think that Memorial High School is all set and taken care of.

Alderman Vaillancourt replied well I appreciate that and I am sure the people on Weston Road do as well. I do notice that back in March there was a communication that said something was going to Bills on Second Reading. It was a light pollution ordinance. Where do we stand with the light pollution ordinance that we have now? Is the one we have being enforced? Is it properly in effect the way it is or should we change it? I mean if we have laws we should enforce them. If not, we shouldn't have them. Are we enforcing this?

Alderman Pariseau moved to refer the light pollution ordinance to the Committee on Bills on Second Reading.

Alderman Vaillancourt asked does anybody know what the status of this is. This was March 9, 2000.

Alderman Pariseau stated Mr. Pelletier sent a letter to the Board if I am correct.

Alderman Vaillancourt stated maybe we should ask Mr. MacKenzie to help on this.

Deputy Clerk Johnson stated I believe it was already referred to the Committee on Bills on Second Reading.

Mr. Max Sink stated the packet did go to Planning. That is probably where it still is. They have not responded to the Committee on Bills on Second Reading yet.

Deputy Clerk Johnson replied that is correct.

Mr. Sink stated to answer your question, Alderman, we are enforcing the ordinances that we have in place now. We have been working with Mr. Pelletier for quite some time now. He and Glenn Gagne have gone to specific locations and addressed problems. They have been working with PSNH to try and address their part.

Alderman Vaillancourt asked so if we get a call from any constituents regarding this problem we should pass those complaints along to your department and they will be taken care of.

Mr. Sink answered that is essentially how it works. We are not manned enough to go out and catch everything so we are reacting to complaints as they come in.

Alderman Vaillancourt stated well we have had a lot of noise complaints recently but I will just state that problems with lights could be as bad as problems with noise for certain people.

Alderman Vaillancourt moved to refer the communication to the Planning Department to prepare an ordinance on light pollution. Alderman Pariseau duly seconded the motion.

Chairman Clancy called for a vote on the motion. There being none opposed, the motion carried.

Chairman Clancy addressed Item 5 of the agenda:

Communication from Connie Jones, Program Manager for Prime Time, The Center of Healthy Aging, requesting that 20 monthly lease spaces in the Canal Street Garage be designated as "Prime Time Only" parking.

Alderman Pariseau stated I think if we grant this request then we are going to have 101 other requests. We just can't accommodate everyone with special parking.

Alderman Pariseau moved to receive and file this item.

Mr. Lolicata stated for your information, this has been going on for two or three months and we were looking for ways to help the elderly over there. There is a way of doing it.

Alderman Pariseau stated but if we do it for Prime Time we are going to have to do it for Sheehan, Phinney, Bass & Green. We are going to have to do it with the Avon lady, etc.

Mr. Lolicata replied I agree with you. I am just telling you that it could have been done.

Alderman Sysyn duly seconded the motion. Chairman Clancy called for a vote. There being none opposed, the motion carried.

Chairman Clancy addressed Item 6 of the agenda:

Communication from Erle B. Pierce, Verizon Public Relations Director,

requesting the recession of the recent Traffic Ordinance regulation relative to handicapped parking in the Downtown area.

Alderman Pariseau stated again the first question that popped out at me is what is wrong with their parking garage.

Chairman Clancy asked is there anybody here from Verizon. Can I ask you a question? How many parking spaces do you have in the garage right now for handicapped parking?

Mr. Erle Pierce stated I am the author of the letter. We have 14 parking spaces right now.

Chairman Clancy asked I am talking about the whole garage.

Mr. Erle Pierce answered I don't know. We are a tenant in the building. I believe 80 spaces.

Chairman Clancy asked how many are designed for handicapped.

Mr. Pierce answered I have no idea. We have 14 that are assigned to us. We have two visitors spaces for people who come in now. We have parking for our directors. This is also a regional headquarters and they are responsible for Maine, New Hampshire and Vermont.

Chairman Clancy asked out of the 14 that you have, do you have any for handicapped people.

Mr. Pierce answered I have two right now that are assigned to folks with walking disabilities.

Alderman Pariseau asked how come they took away a handicapped permit from an employee about six weeks ago and these arrangements were made with Mr. Hickey.

Mr. Pierce answered Mr. Hickey is my boss and to my knowledge we haven't taken anything away from anyone. We still have two people with walking disabilities that are using spots in our garage. That is of the dozen or so that are assigned to the building.

Alderman Pariseau asked who is in that building besides Verizon.

Mr. Pierce answered many companies. McLane & Graf, several advertising companies, Prudential Securities...

Alderman Pariseau interjected and Verizon only has 14 spaces.

Mr. Pierce answered yes. We are a tenant of the building.

Alderman Pariseau asked and of the 14, 2 are handicapped.

Mr. Pierce answered none are designated for handicapped. We have two people with walking disabilities who are parked in the garage right now. There are none in there.

Alderman Sysyn asked isn't it an ADA law that they have to have some handicapped spaces.

Mr. Lolicata stated I was told this past week by some people including Intown, that out of that whole building there is not one handicapped space. Now I think the owner of that building should look into providing handicapped spaces for his tenants and other people if that is true. Now the City has been providing them all around there. These buildings are also governed by ADA laws and federal regulations. If that comment is true, there had better be some handicapped spaces put in there for the people who work there before they start looking outside to change laws.

Chairman Clancy replied I agree.

Mr. Pierce asked will somebody be contacting the owner of the building.

Chairman Clancy answered not to my knowledge. Mr. Lolicata are you going to?

Mr. Lolicata replied if somebody would give me the owners name and phone number, I would be glad to speak to him. I have the law right here.

Mr. Pierce stated in the interim we still have people with walking disabilities and I would address this Committee and ask that some relief be granted them. Short of rescinding the law as I said in my letter, some alternative plan that would allow those with the worse disabilities to get a pass and maybe even pay for it to allow them to stay close to the building.

Alderman Pariseau replied I think what this Committee is saying is that the owner of the building ought to provide that type of service. It is not up to this Committee to prioritize who is more handicapped than someone else.

Mr. Pierce responded I agree but let's say there are 80 spaces. I don't know what the ADA requirements are but even if it is 10%, which I believe is high, and they put in 8 spaces, that is still not enough. I don't know how many people there are. I can't speak for the other businesses in that building. There are probably 800 to 900 people who work in that building.

Chairman Clancy asked where are the designated spots for the handicapped around here.

Mr. Lolicata answered you have two or three in the Middle Street Parking Lot. You have two or three from between the front of City Hall down Merrimack Street. There are six right there in that area.

Chairman Clancy stated that is not for all day.

Mr. Lolicata replied yes it is. They can park 24 hours in a handicapped spot but at meters, etc. it is limited to three hours.

Alderman Pariseau asked, Mr. Pierce, how many handicapped individuals are employed by Verizon.

Mr. Pierce answered 12 to 14. I don't have an exact count.

Alderman Pariseau stated if we look at the total occupancy of the building, if you have 14 I can picture other companies coming in here and asking for special exceptions as well. What are we going to do?

Mr. Pierce replied I can see where you stand on this. There is no question about it. This is a very emotional issue but I will tell you that there are...if my understanding is correct, those with handicapped plates now can park in the garage all day for free in designated handicapped spots. What I am suggesting is that if there is some sort of pass that we could get for those...and the City would set the rate. Maybe it is equal to what a rate is over at the garage for a monthly pass so the City doesn't lose any revenue but those people who have that walking disability...I mean right now if they park in a spot for three hours and get there early enough to find one close enough to the building, they are going to have to go back out where walking is a problem to begin with, three or four more times in order to move their car. With 12 or 14 people, the designated spots go pretty fast. I am talking about on street parking. Parking in the garage is not a problem unless you have a walking disability and I think our employees, whether they like it or not, have a parking spot in the garage. It is not an issue of paying. It is an issue of having a place for their car and having to walk two blocks or so to work. What I

am suggesting is that we get some sort of pass for those who have the walking disability. The City can set a price. I am just trying to reach a compromise here because I know there is a revenue issue on this.

Alderman Pariseau stated those handicapped individuals have a handicapped placard already.

Mr. Pierce replied or it is on their license plate, correct.

Alderman Pariseau asked aren't there parking spaces for handicapped in the City garages.

Mr. Pierce answered there are plenty of handicapped parking spaces in the City garages. That is not the issue. The issue is getting from the garage to the building walking. I want the people who are willing to go out and buy this pass...

Chairman Clancy interjected we are not going to sell any passes. Maybe the next Traffic Committee will.

Mr. Pierce asked what do you do at Springfield College for the students who can't get out of their classes. I think there is some sort of arrangement...my understanding was there was some sort of pass for the students there.

Mr. Lolicata answered the colleges down there have on street parking and that is anywhere in the Millyard. I don't know what Springfield College does for their students unless they provide their own transportation from these spots. I have no idea.

Mr. Pierce replied then my information must be incorrect. I understood that there was some sort of pass and the meter readers would see that this person would be at an expired meter and not give them a ticket.

Mr. Lolicata stated there is an on street parking pass. That is correct.

Mr. Pierce asked so there is an on street parking pass.

Mr. Lolicata answered down in the Millyard only by ordinance.

Mr. Pierce asked so you do have passes then.

Mr. Lolicata answered down in the Millyard.

Mr. Pierce asked so it wouldn't be possible to get something like that for downtown.

Mr. Lolicata answered we do have some but there wouldn't be near enough for the 10 hour meters. All of the meters around your particular area are two-hour meters for retailers. There are none downtown for 10 hours.

Chairman Clancy stated what we are really looking for is for people to come in and go out and shop. We don't want to tie up a meter for 10 hours a day.

Mr. Lolicata replied that is why on Elm Street we put in the handicapped spots from block to block. To anticipate 20, 30 or 40 more especially in one building, that is too many.

Mr. Pierce stated I am not anticipating 20. I was thinking if every one of our people needed one...when I say 500 people by the way I mean between both buildings – 900 and 770 Elm Street. We have like 350 employees in the 900 Elm Street building, which is the one I am speaking about. I also have an employee here that is affected by this and she would like to say a few words. Would you like to hear from her?

Alderman Pariseau stated I don't know what good it would do but she can express her feelings.

The employee stated I can't be in the sun and I am not supposed to get overheated. There are days that I can walk from the garage but in the summer I can't because that is going to make my condition worse.

Alderman Vaillancourt asked then what are you doing now.

The employee answered I am out on disability right now so it hasn't affected me but when I go back to work I don't know what I am going to do

Chairman Clancy asked before you went out on disability where did you park.

The employee answered I would park in the Middle Street Parking Lot at one of the metered spots.

On motion of Alderman Pariseau, duly seconded by Alderman Vaillancourt, it was voted to receive and file this item.

Chairman Clancy addressed Item 7 of the agenda:

STOP SIGNS:

On Fowler St. at Mystic St., SEC
On Fowler St. at Titus Ave., NWC
Alderman Pariseau

RUBENSTEIN LOT PARKING PERMIT RATE:

8AM-5:30PM MONDAY-FRIDAY -- \$ 36.00

Alderman Levasseur

RESCIND NO PARKING LOADING ZONE:

On Elm St. east side, from Grove St. to a point 30 feet southerly
Alderman Levasseur

RESCIND NO PARKING ANYTIME:

On Auburn St., north side, from Elm St. to Chestnut St.
On Auburn St., south side, from Elm to Pine St.
Alderman Levasseur

10 HOUR PARKING METERS:

On Auburn St. north side, from Chestnut St. to Willow St. 12 spaces
On Auburn St. south side, from Elm St. to Willow St. 6 spaces
Alderman Levasseur

TRAFFIC SIGNALS: - Emergency Act:

Wellington Rd. and Edward Roy Dr.
Alderman Gatsas

CROSSWALK: - Emergency Act:

On Wellington Rd. east of Edward Roy Dr.
Alderman Gatsas

On Kelley St. west of Dubuque St.
On Kelley St. east of Rimmon St.
Alderman Thibault

RESCIND STOP SIGN: - Emergency Act:

On Edward Roy Dr. at Wellington Rd., NWC
Alderman Gatsas

NO TURN ON RED DURING SCHOOL HOURS 7AM-3:30PM

MONDAY THROUGH FRIDAY:

On Auburn St. at Beech St., EB
Alderman Clancy

NO TRUCKS ALLOWED:

On Boynton St., from S. Main St. to Sheridan St. (town line)

Emergency Act

Alderman Cashin

On Pine Island Rd. from Brown Ave. to Whitwell St.

On Greenleaf St. from Brown Ave. to Whitwell St

On Gay St. from Tessier St. to Greenleaf St.

Alderman Vaillancourt

NO TRUCKS (9:30PM-7AM):

On Union St. from Willow St. to Hayward St.

Alderman Shea

RESCIND NO TRUCKS ALLOWED:

On Union St. from Willow St. to Hayward St.

Alderman Shea

NO PARKING:

On Amory St., north side, from a point 20 feet east of Hevey Northback St. to Montgomery St.

Alderman Thibault

On Willow St. west side, from Auburn St. to Valley St.

On Auburn St. north side, from Elm to Willow St.

On Auburn St. south side from Willow to Pine St.

Alderman Levasseur

On Croteau Court, south side, from Mammoth Rd. to a point 70 feet easterly

Alderman Gatsas

On Precourt St. east side, from Varney St. to the north property line of 125 Precourt St.

Alderman Cashin

RESCIND NO PARKING

On Amory St. north side, from Amory St. to Montgomery St

Alderman Thibault

On Precourt St. east side, from Varney St. to the property line of 133 Precourt St.

Alderman Cashin

RESCIND PARKING 2 HOUR (8AM-6PM) unlimited:

On Pine St. east side, from Harrison St. to a point 175 feet north
Alderman Levasseur

PARKING 30 MINUTES:

On Merrimack St. north side from Maple St. to a point 50 feet westerly
Alderman Sysyn

RESCIND PARKING 30 MINUTES:

On Merrimack St. north side, from Maple St. to a point 110 feet westerly
Alderman Sysyn

On motion of Alderman Pariseau, duly seconded by Alderman Sysyn, it was voted to approve the traffic agenda.

TABLED ITEMS

8. Communication from the Chief of Police submitting a proposal to reduce the city-wide speed limit from 30 to 25 mph.

Alderman Vaillancourt asked are we ever going to do anything with this. Why are we waiting.

Chairman Clancy answered I guess the Chief is going to be coming back from vacation. You know I have my feelings about the 25 mph.

Alderman Pariseau stated we could take it off the table and receive and file it.

Alderman Sysyn asked didn't he want to come and address it.

Alderman Vaillancourt stated I think we were doing this as a courtesy but he knows these traffic meetings are scheduled on a regular basis. He has had three or four months to address it.

On motion of Alderman Pariseau, duly seconded by Alderman Vaillancourt, it was voted to remove this item from the table.

On motion of Alderman Pariseau, duly seconded by Alderman Vaillancourt, it was voted to receive and file this item.

9. Proposed Scooter Ordinance

This item remained on the table.

10. Proposed Parking Violation Fines submitted by Police Department.

On motion of Alderman Sysyn, duly seconded by Alderman Pariseau, it was voted to remove this item from the table.

Alderman Pariseau moved to accept the proposed parking violation fines and refer the ordinance to the Committee on Bills on Second Reading.

Deputy Clerk Johnson stated I just want to make a notation as to what that is. I want to make sure that the Committee is aware of the changes that were made. If you look at the attached ordinance, the changes that are being made are to increase the expired meter from \$10 over time to \$15 and no parking to \$20, which I think there was no objection to last time. The questions came in on the after 7 days and 14 days and if you look at the ordinance the 14 days has been eliminated and what they did is double the other three fines. If the Committee agrees, we will send this to the Board as recommended for adoption.

Alderman Sysyn duly seconded the motion.

Alderman Vaillancourt asked if you don't pay the fine it is doubled after 7 days and if you don't pay after 14 days it just stays doubled and doesn't go up again.

Chairman Clancy answered that is correct.

Chairman Clancy called for a vote on the motion. There being none opposed, the motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS

Communication from Wayne Treamer requesting various items dealing with Crosbie Street.

Alderman Pariseau asked why didn't they go through their Alderman.

Mr. Lolicata answered they did. I got a call early this morning on this. Alderman Wihby called me. Mr. Treamer has been assured that there will be no speed bumps by Alderman Wihby and myself. We will take care of him as far as the signs are concerned. That is no problem. We referred him to the Highway Department to get an encumbrance and horses for the closed street.

On motion of Alderman Clancy, duly seconded by Alderman Pariseau, it was voted to approve all items except the speed bumps.

Alderman Vaillancourt stated I have a concern about motorcycle noise. I have a particular constituent who wrote me a letter and he referred it to the Police Chief but he thinks this is being done intentionally. Whether or not it is intentional I don't want to get into that but we ought to enforce the motorcycle noise ordinances because even as I have been riding around the City on my bicycle I think it is outrageous. We talk about concert noise. This motorcycle noise is right in front of people's houses. I just think we should ask the police to make sure they enforce these ordinances. We have the ordinances. I have checked it out. It just needs to be enforced more vigilantly.

Lt. Winn stated I have to tell you that in the last couple of weeks I have received a lot of complaints regarding motorcycle noise. I have spoken to the gentleman that you spoke about. I will have to tell you that in the last three weeks we have written 12 summonses in front of his house. Those were for speed, not for noise, but I think he is satisfied that we are doing something. We do have a decibel meter and we are going to purchase another one. The one that we have is kind of outdated. So we are aware of this problem and will start picking it up a bit.

Alderman Pariseau stated while we are on the subject of motorcycles, I have a problem on Gold Street at both ends, from Calef Road to South Willow Street. Apparently the dealership on John Devine Drive is using that as a testing site and it is raising havoc with the neighborhoods, especially on the lower end of Gold Street between South Beech and Calef Road. Something ought to be done. I don't know if we can do anything with not only the motorcycles using Gold Street as a testing area, but all of the automobile dealers that are there like Dobles, Volkswagen and Mitsubishi. They are using those streets for test-driving. I don't think the dealers should be using residential neighborhoods for test-driving.

Lt. Winn replied I am not aware of any ordinance or state law that prohibits that.

Alderman Pariseau stated if not the bulk of the problem on Gold Street it adds considerably to the traffic there. I don't know what we can do. I tried talking to dealer about this and he thought I was nuts. He had no concern for the neighbors.

Mr. Ashooh stated I am speaking as a resident of Ward 3 tonight. It is rare that Alderman Vaillancourt and I agree on something. I live at Wall Street Towers. Myself, Peter Levy as you know...there are a number of people who live at Wall Street Towers and in the corporation housing down below. Any Thursday, Friday, or Saturday night downtown until 2 AM, 3 AM or 4 AM you can't sleep because of the motorcycle noise. There will be correspondence coming to this committee about the noise downtown from motorcycles. There was one fellow about a month ago, it was after the fireworks and from Charley Peppers down to Spring Street

and down Spring Street up Canal Street to Hollis Street and back up again there were four motorcycles ripping around all night long. I think what Alderman Vaillancourt brought up is getting to be a citywide issue and in the summer it really is unbearable.

Alderman Pariseau stated I don't know if there is an ordinance on the books, but these motorcycles traveling the roadways are louder than the airplanes in South Manchester. I don't know what we can do to quiet them down. It is getting awful.

Lt. Winn stated I spoke with a lady who lives in Wall Street Towers and she said exactly what Skip said. There is a state law that governs that, the decibels, and there is an ordinance. It is something that we are aware of like I said.

Mr. Ashooh stated I am here as a result of a meeting that I had or I attended with Tom Lolicata and Jay Taylor as part of the parking committee that Jay heads up. The Traffic Department is about ready to execute signage in the City and one of the things that came up was what we could put on signage in the City to locate the civic center or the Verizon Wireless Arena. To put either the logo of the building or the name Verizon Wireless Arena on these signs would make them non-conforming. We have never had this situation before because it can be considered advertising. In this case it is a City owned building and the name of the building is the Verizon Wireless Arena. What we are looking for...my discussion with the people at the State DOT is that signage at this point is a work in progress. They are going to put up some fairly generic signs on the state highways but they are going to be reviewing all of the signs and there is a federal program that they hope to become enrolled in called an Attraction Signage Program, which would make the use of a logo on the state highways acceptable. What I am looking for is to see if this Committee would consider allowing the Traffic Department to put up four signs on each major thoroughfare that they want to use to guide traffic into town. You either put the name of Verizon Wireless Arena on the signs or use the log or something to acknowledge the civic center. Arena could mean the JFK Coliseum or the West Side Arena. We think the Verizon Wireless Arena in some fashion on the City sign would be something good. That being said, all of this signage I guess is going to be...the state is going to tear it all down and redo it over the next three years anyway. For now what we are looking for is something in town only.

Chairman Clancy asked how many signs in all.

Mr. Lolicata answered four or possibly five. I have taken care of all of the major arteries coming into the City. If you put Verizon Wireless Arena on a sign, that takes up a lot of room.

Chairman Clancy stated why don't we just have a picture of the arena with an arrow.

Mr. Ashooh replied what you do have that will be going up on the building probably in the next 45 days or so is the name on the building that would be visible from 293 approaching Exit 5 with a very distinguishable logo for the building, which is their slash. You wouldn't have to print out Verizon Wireless Arena on this huge sign but you could perhaps use the logo and print it over a silhouette of the building or something like that.

Alderman Pariseau stated I don't have a problem with that.

Mr. Ashooh replied I guess what we are looking for is leeway from the Traffic Department to explore that.

On motion by Alderman Pariseau, duly seconded by Alderman Vaillancourt, it was voted to allow the Traffic Department to explore signage for the civic center.

Alderman Sysyn stated everybody is commenting on the fact that there is no parking for the civic center. They had 10,000 people at Singer Park. Where did they park? They didn't have a problem did they?

Mr. Lolicata replied they parked right down in that area and in the Millyard. That tells me that there is plenty of parking. I heard there were over 10,000 people and it was well done.

Mr. Lolicata stated the other signs for the civic center directing people to come in will match the state. They will be green and white generic signs. It will say civic arena on all of them.

Communication from the Manchester Church of Christ requesting the use of the Pine Street parking lot at the Federal Building on Saturday, September 29, 2001.

On motion of Alderman Pariseau, duly seconded by Alderman Sysyn, it was voted to approve this request.

There being no further business, on motion of Alderman Vaillancourt, duly seconded by Alderman Pariseau, it was voted to adjourn.

A True Record. Attest.

Clerk of Committee